

Shared Worker Agreement (Voluntary Addendum to ORWARN Agreement)

Introduction:

The [Regional Water Providers Consortium](#) (Consortium) recognizes that the provision of life and safety responses could be seriously disrupted during a catastrophic emergency. These disruptions include inter-state and local bridge failures that could significantly affect utility personnel's ability to respond to their individual utilities. The Consortium believes it would be advantageous to have a shared worker agreement (SWA) in place with ORWARN member jurisdictions that would allow for water and wastewater provider staff to report to an alternative water provider location, presumably near their home (or emergency shelter location), to assist with regional recovery until such time as the staff person is able to report to their own place of work.

The [Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization](#) developed a SWA for emergency operation center staff that was used as a model for this agreement. Consortium members worked with Clark Balfour (attorney for Tualatin Valley Water District and one of the original developers of the ORWARN agreement) on a SWA. He suggested that an addendum to the existing ORWARN agreement could be an effective means of implementation. The ORWARN agreement already addresses requests for personnel, cost reimbursement, dispute resolution, indemnification, and other terms important to a SWA. However, the ORWARN agreement does not address the defined self-deployment aspect of the stranded worker concept. The SWA agreement compliments the ORWARN agreement and extends its capabilities in mutual aid by addressing a defined voluntary and self-deployment aspect and outlines expectations for such a deployment.

The SWA addendum applies to employees responsible for various field and public work activities. Signing the addendum is voluntary, and a receiving member is under no obligation to accept a shared worker. The Consortium supports the addendum language and would like to see the addendum be available to all ORWARN members.

Highlights:

- Voluntary
- Does not impact existing ORWARN agreement or participation
- Any member of ORWARN can sign addendum and participate in the SWA
- Only activated during a catastrophic event like Cascadia where transportation and communications systems have failed.
- Consenting ORWARN members can determine how the addendum is used for their employees and set out expectations (see SOPs)

Suggested Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):

ORWARN members who are interested in participating in the SWA should consider implementing the following sample SOPs:

- Define the type of emergency your staff can deploy – e.g. earthquake where major transportation routes are disrupted; communication systems are unavailable, or when a disaster declaration is announced
- Determine which employees are eligible e.g. construction and maintenance crews, finance, all

- Define type of work stranded workers can perform and qualifications needed e.g. ICS trained, minimum number of years of experience, specific certifications
- Make a list of your eligible stranded workers, with qualifications, contact information, employer, etc. The RDPO maintains a spreadsheet on Dropbox that all participating agencies can access.
- Recommend pre-event contact by the potentially stranded worker with approved receiving agencies
- Prepare documentation in advance of receiving shared workers (intake form) and have shared worker sign
- Outline how a deployed worker should communicate with their employer, if/when means of communication are restored and at their earliest opportunity
- Prepare a checklist that determines how the agency might receive a shared worker, where and to whom they would report, how they would be tracked, and deployed